



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY • OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS • WASHINGTON, DC 20585

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 23, 2005

Bush Administration to Expand Beryllium Disease Screening Program

Former American Beryllium Company employees eligible for free screening

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman today announced the Department of Energy (DOE) will expand a beryllium screening program to include former employees of Bradenton's now-defunct American Beryllium Company (ABC), a DOE beryllium vendor. Beryllium is a component used in nuclear weapons built by the Department of Energy.

"Through no fault of their own, these Cold Warriors were left out in the cold when their former employers went out of business. By expanding this screening program, President Bush and the Department of Energy honor these men and women and the important role they played in strengthening our national security," said Secretary Bodman.

Today's announcement expands the beryllium screening program to include former DOE beryllium vendor employees, like those of ABC, to ensure that workers who no longer have an employer to turn to for beryllium disease testing can now receive this important screening. It is expected that approximately 500 former ABC workers will be eligible for testing under the new program. The Department of Energy will offer these individuals a blood test at no cost to check for beryllium disease at a local Bradenton clinic. Former ABC employees who no longer reside in the Bradenton area will be offered a test kit to take to their local physician or lab of choice. DOE will pay for both the costs of drawing the blood and the analysis of the blood.

Beryllium is a metallic element with unique properties that make it suitable for use in many industries, especially for aerospace and defense applications, including nuclear weapons production. In solid form, it is not harmful, but small particles of beryllium-containing materials produced as by-products of machining or other processes can spread through the air and be breathed into the lungs.

If a screened individual receives a positive diagnosis for beryllium disease, former ABC employees can receive medical monitoring and/or compensation through the Department of Labor under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation program.

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The cost of the expanded program, which will begin in early March, 2005, is expected to be approximately \$3 million over the next several years.

Former workers interested in medical screening can contact the Oak Ridge Institute of Science and Education (ORISE) at 1-866-219-3442.

For a comprehensive list of DOE beryllium vendor companies that are no longer in business, please see the page attached.

MEDIA INFORMATION

BROADCAST AFFILIATES:

Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environment, Health and Safety, John Shaw, will be available to address additional questions VIA SATELLITE from **2:00-2:30** (EST) today, **Wednesday, February 23, 2005**. Please dial in by 1:55 p.m. so the interview can begin promptly at 2:00. The satellite coordinates and telephone dial-in number are listed below:

**Satellite: Galaxy 3, Transponder 22,
Transponder 22
Polarization: Vertical
Frequency 4141 (C-band)**

Dial-In Number: 202-287-5318

PRINT and RADIO REPORTERS:

Assistant Secretary Shaw will also host a press conference call for PRINT and RADIO REPORTERS at **3:00 pm** (EST) today, **Wednesday, February 23, 2005**. Please dial in by 2:55 p.m. so the interview can begin promptly at 3:00.

Dial-In Number: 301-903-9195

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Former Department of Energy Beryllium Vendors

- Atomics International (all locations);
- Nuclear Metals, Inc. (all locations);
- Beryllium Corporation of America (all locations);
- Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (NUMEC) (all locations);
- Speedring, Inc (Culman, AL);
- Connecticut Aircraft Nuclear Engine Laboratory (Middletown, CT);
- Machlett Laboratories (Springdale, CT);
- Gerity-Michigan Corporation (Adrian, MI);
- Revere Copper and Brass (Detroit, MI);
- Speedring Systems, Inc. (Detroit, MI);
- Wolverine Tube Division (Detroit, MI);
- National Beryllia (Haskell, NJ);
- U.S. Pipe and Foundry (Burlington, NJ);
- United Lead Co. (Middlesex, NJ);
- General Astrometals (Yonkers, NY);
- Radium Chemical Company (New York, NY);
- Sylvania Corning Nuclear Corporation – Bayside Lab (Bayside, NY);
- Beryllium Metals and Chemical Corporation (BERMET) (Bessemer City, NC);
- Clifton Products Company (Painesville, OH);
- Aeroprojects, Inc. (Westchester, PA);
- Foote Mineral Company (East Whiteland Twp, PA);
- McDanel Refractory Company (Beaver Falls, PA);
- Vitro Manufacturing (Canonsburg, PA);
- Vitro Corporation of America (Oak Ridge, TN)

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